

Very good

Sondra Green

DUCHESNE COUNTY

Duchesne County, located in the northeastern part of the State of Utah (The Beehive State), is one of Utah's most extensive counties. It is bordered by Wasatch and Utah Counties on the West, Summit and Daggett Counties on the North, Uintah County on the East, and Carbon County on the South.

Duchesne City, the county seat, with a near-1000 population, is the gateway to a vast upland valley and one of the eastward approaches to the primitive wilderness in the Uinta Mountains. Situated at a 5515-foot elevation on U. S. Highway 40, Duchesne is bordered by blue mountains and green banks of the Duchesne and Strawberry Rivers which form a junction within the city limits east of the business area.

Most of Duchesne County is within the boundaries of the great basin known as the "Uintah Basin", home of the Ute Indians, dinosaur quarries, unique mountain scenery, and thriving cities. The "Basin" includes Uintah and Duchesne Counties in Utah and extends eastward into Colorado. Geologists claim the "Basin" is the result of a prehistoric lake referred to as "Uinta".

STATISTICS OF DUCHESNE COUNTY

Population (1950 Census)	8,134
Area	3,266 sq. mi.
Indian Lands	455,394 acres
Cultivated Lands (Privately-owned)	629,707 acres
Grazing Lands (Privately-owned)	226,599 acres
Forest Area	739,053 acres

Tourist Attractions

Dude ranches, wilderness area, thousands of emerald-green glacial lakes, tumbling streams, monstrous palisades, monoliths, rugged canyons, vari-colored rock formations, world's largest pinon pine and juniper forest, blazing autumn colors in canyons, dinosaur fossils, ancient Indian pictographs and hieroglyphics, native Indian dances, rodeos, county fair, boating, hiking, fishing and hunting, horseback-riding, and one of the newest County Courthouses in the State are all ample material for a photographer's dream in color or black and white exposures.

Communities

Five towns and cities are incorporated within Duchesne County - Duchesne, Myton, Roosevelt, Tabiona and Altamont. Other towns and communities are: Hanna, Utahn, Strawberry, Fruitland, Talmage, Mtn. Home, Boneta, Altonah, Mt. Emmons, Upalco, Ioka, Bluebell, Arcadia, Bridgeland, Neola, Montwell-Monarch, and Mine

by Sondra Green

Mile or Harper.

Forests

Three national forests extend into Duchesne County - Uinta National Forest, containing 179,649 acres; Wasatch National Forest, containing 180,623 acres; and Ashley National Forest, containing 378,781 acres.

Mountains

The highest mountain in Utah is in Duchesne County. Kings Peak, 13,498 ft. above sea level, reserves this distinction. This towering snow-capped peak is said to have been named for Olaf King, a trapper, whose wanderings took him into this remote area. Five other peaks rise above a 13,000-foot elevation in Duchesne County: Mt. Emmons, 13,428; Gilbert Peak, 13,449; Wilson Peak, 13,095; Mt. Lovenia, 13,227. There are also six peaks in the area rising to a 12,000 or 13,000 ft. altitude. These peaks are located in the northern part of the county and are in the range of mountains called "The Uintas" - the only mountain range in the U. S. A. that extends east and west.

Streams

The Uinta Range forms the headwaters of eight streams or rivers. Two have their beginnings in Wasatch County - Carrant Creek and the Strawberry River. These streams flow eastward and join the Duchesne River within the bounds of Duchesne City. Traveling north and east from Carrant Creek is Red Creek, Duchesne River, Rock Creek, Lake Fork, Yellowstone, and the Uinta Rivers. It is waters from melting winter snows in the high mountains that keep these streams flowing all the time. During the spring run-off caused by thawing weather conditions, the streams are swollen and turbulent as they roar through their channels on their way to the Green and Colorado Rivers to the east.

Lakes

Throughout the high Uintas are thousands of fresh-water lakes fed by melting snow and abounding with trout. The better-known lakes are Mirror and Moon Lakes, (which are accessible by auto), Granddaddy lakes, Mohawk, Governor Dern, Pine Island, Palisade, Clement, Kidney, etc. These are all high lakes (above 10,000 ft.) which compliment the mountain streams for excellent trout fishing. The high Uintas have been set aside by Act of Congress as a permanent Primitive Area, accessible only by foot or horseback. Several dude ranches offer guided tours into the wilderness for the hardy vacationer who enjoys the wild grandeur of unspoiled mountain beauty with

snow-capped peaks, onyx blue lakes, frothy white streams and emerald green forests.

Trees

The high alpine country grows thickly with quaking aspen whose leaves turn a golden yellow in the early fall. Conifers are abundant - Douglas fir, Engleman spruce, Norway pine, Yellow pine, balsam, and juniper. In lower elevations grow species of alder, birch, cherry, oak, cottonwood, poplar, elm. Shrub-type plants include pinon, mountain mahogany, sage, squawbush, and sagebrush.

Birds

Duchesne County and the Uintah Basin reportedly have a greater variety of bird species than any other section of the nation. From the arid desert regions to the swamp land, lakes and high alpine country, natural habitat is available for almost all types of birds - from eagles to sparrow hawks, geese to teal, vultures to shrikes, crows to startlings and jays, kingbirds to the tiny hummingbirds, as well as game birds such as pheasant, quail, grouse, and sagehens.

Animals

Varied kinds of animals range from the high mountain peaks to the arid desert reaches of Duchesne County. The little pika that lies in the higher altitudes cuts hay in the summer for winter use is likely the hardiest. He will stack leaves, grass and moss in piles sometimes four feet high to use during the long winter months. He is sometimes called the rock rabbit. Marmots are also swillers of the mountainous areas, but they hibernate during the winter. The weasel, whose summer color is a dull brown on his back and yellow underneath, changes coats for winter to one of pure white except for the tip of the tail which is black. Mink, beaver, and muskrat live near streams where they build their homes and search for food. A few pine martin are still found, but they are nearly extinct in the Uintas as is the Bighorn mountain sheep. Chipmunks, the friendly little tree-dwelling squirrel, gray ground squirrels, flying squirrels, pack rats, moles, kangaroo rats, prairie dogs, gophers, rabbits, hares, skunks, porcupines, lynx (bobcats), coyotes, foxes (red), ring-tailed cats, mountain lions (also known as cougar, painter, panther, puma), badgers, make their home in Duchesne County. Even black bear have been seen in the more remote sections. Mule deer are abundant, ranging in the high country during the summer, and in the foothills and the world's largest pinon and juniper forest during the winter. A few elk have been "planted" in the county by game associations.

Flowers

Rarely can such a variety of wild flowers be found in any one spot such as thrives in Duchesne County and the Uintah Basin. Cactus and yucca form vivid colors to enhance the more barren desert areas. Utah's state flower, the Sego Lily, flourishes in vast fields in the semi-desert climate at a more than 5,000-ft. level. White and blue columbine peek shyly to the sun in high woodland gardens beside lupine and foxglove, their braver neighbors. The desert evening primrose scents the cool night air with sweet odors. Wild hollyhocks paint the desert a salmon-orange with late spring blooms. Indian paintbrush affords a splash of red among the drab-gray sages, and purple violets cling to shady banks near sparkling streams.

Minerals

Many known deposits of minerals are in Duchesne County. Elaterite (a hydrocarbon, the only known deposits in the United States), coal, silver, manganese, asphalt, iron, phosphate, copper, bentonite, and gilsonite. Large reserves of oil are believed to be underground in Duchesne County. The larger oil companies have been conducting extensive exploration work here during the past few years. Oil test wells have been drilled and many have proved successful. Geologists label the Uintah Basin area as one of the nation's top potential oil fields.

Industries

Because much of Duchesne County is federal-owned, the principal industry is raising of livestock which graze on the government lands. Cattle range the valleys and canyons near water sources while sheep feed on the more arid parts and in the higher mountains. Dairy herds are a principal source of income for many farm homes. Varied farm crops grown include wheat, oats, barley, corn, potatoes, alfalfa hay, and alfalfa seed. Alfalfa fields reserved for seed production in the Myton locality have averaged as much as 1,000 pounds of seed per acre. The Uintah Basin is world-famous for its sweet clover honey, much of which is produced near the alfalfa fields in Pleasant Valley located near Myton. Orchards are not successful in the Uintah Basin because of the severe winter weather which drops the mercury to 40 degrees below zero at times. Garden produce tends to be more flavorful and naturally sweet than that grown in lower elevations. Crops are raised with the aid of irrigation. Water supply for irrigation is from the numerous streams and reservoirs within the county. Thousands of board feet of lumber are produced annually from the forests growing on the high mountain slopes.

History

Duchesne County was part of Wasatch County until Dec. 7, 1914, when the division was made. Most of the county was opened for settlement in the spring of 1905.

